

In the Claims

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Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A panel element having a utilization side (11), a counter draw (12) opposite the utilization side (11), a first longitudinal side (13) having a tongue (2), a second longitudinal side (14) which is located opposite the first longitudinal side (13) and has a groove (3) with a contour opposite to that of the tongue (2), wherein the tongue (2) having a first projection (21) extending beyond the utilization side (11) in a first direction parallel to the utilization side (11) and normal to the longitudinal direction of the tongue (2), in the region of the counter draw (12), the tongue (2) having a second projection (22) extending in the first direction, a first undercut (23) being formed between the first projection (21) and the second projection (22), the groove (3) having a third projection (31) extending beyond the counter draw (12) in the first direction; and for creating a tongue and groove joint the tongue (2) being attached in an inclined fashion to the groove (3) of another similar panel element and substantially on account of a rotary motion the tongue and groove joint being established by locking the tongue (2) in the groove (3) of the other similar panel element, wherein the ~~characterized in that~~ the second projection (22) of the tongue (2) can be locked with the third projection (31) of the groove (3) of the other similar panel element and a semi-plastic deformation of the second projection (22) of the tongue (2) and/or the third projection (31) of the groove (3) of the other similar panel occurs during locking.
2. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the first undercut (23) has a constriction in its opening (24) region.
3. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the tongue has at least one extension and/or one second undercut ~~characterized in that~~ in the second direction normal to the utilization side (11) ~~tongue (2) has at least one extension (27) and/or one second undercut (28).~~
4. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 3, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the first projection (21) comprises the extension (27) and/or the second undercut (28).
5. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 3 ~~or 4~~, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the first undercut (23) and the second undercut (28) are merged.

6. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1, wherein when the ~~any one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that~~ tongue (2) is connected with the groove (3) of another similar panel element, the tongue (2) and groove (3) have at least five contact points (41, 42, 43, 44, 45) for power transmission.
7. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1, wherein ~~any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that~~ the second projection (22) of the tongue (2) can be locked with the third projection (31) of the groove (3) of the other similar panel element by an audible and noticeable click.
8. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 7, wherein when the ~~characterized in that~~ tongue (2) is connected with the groove (3) of another similar panel element the semi-plastic deformation is at least partially reconverted.
9. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1, wherein the ~~any one of the previous claims, characterized in that~~ longitudinal sides (13, 14) and/or the face sides (15, 16) are at least partially treated, in particular sprayed, coated or the like, with a hydrophobic agent.
10. (Currently amended) The panel element according to claim 1, wherein ~~any one of the previous claims, characterized in that~~ glue channels (61, 62) form when the tongue (2) is connected with the groove (3) of another similar panel element.

11. (New) A interlocking floor system comprising at least two panel elements, wherein a panel element comprises:

- a utilization side;

- a counter draw side positioned opposite the utilization side;

- a first longitudinal side;

- a second longitudinal side positioned opposite the first longitudinal side, wherein the first and second longitudinal sides are generally normal to the utilization and counter draw side , wherein the first longitudinal side comprises:

  - a first projection adjacent and parallel to the utilization side and extending beyond both the utilization side and the counter draw side; and

  - a second projection adjacent and parallel to the counter draw side, wherein the first projection and second projection extend in a first direction and the first projection extends further beyond the second projection in an amount sufficient to form a first undercut therebetween;

- wherein the second longitudinal side comprises:

  - a second undercut adjacent and parallel to the utilization side and having a contour corresponding to the contour of the first projection; and

  - a third projection that extend in a direction opposite to the first direction and is positioned adjacent and parallel to the draw side, wherein the third projection extends beyond both the utilization side and the counter draw side in a sufficient amount to form a contour corresponding to the contour of the first undercut; and

- wherein a rotary motion locks the first projection of a first panel element into the second undercut of a second panel element and locks the third projection of the second panel element into the first undercut of the first panel element.